



IM Weekly Highlights



- The Fort Peck and Fort Belknap tribal nations have tentatively committed to financial support of the IM Project.
- Development is underway of several Memoranda of Understanding between the IM and different federal agencies.
- Toole County Sheriff's Office subscriber units are now registered on the statewide trunked system.
- Jurisdictions are encouraged to send in requests for replacement narrowband repeaters and base stations by Feb. 27. (See article below).

IM Technical Committee Announces Narrowband Grant Opportunity

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

On Feb. 7, the Interoperability Montana (IM) Project announced a funding opportunity to help local, state and tribal government agencies in Montana replace wideband radio repeaters and/or base stations with narrowband ones. This change is mandated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). By Jan. 1, 2013, all non-Federal public safety licensees using 25 kHz radio systems must be migrated to narrowband 12.5 kHz channels. (For more information, visit: http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-09-2589A1.pdf.)

Agencies that do not meet this deadline not only potentially face the loss of communication capabilities, but also may be subject to FCC fines or license cancellations for non-compliance. Public safety agencies need to aggressively work to meet narrowband deadlines to avoid these penalties, yet many do not have the financial resources to do so. Fortunately, last Nov., the IM Board of Project Directors (IMPD) allocated funds to purchase narrowband repeaters and base stations that will assist jurisdictions with the transition to narrowbanding. The majority of the funding available will go to local jurisdictions; however, a limited amount has been set aside for State agencies. Priority will be given to those public safety member jurisdictions

that have not previously benefitted from IM support.

The IM Technical Committee (IMTC)—made up of technical representatives from eight regional consortia, the Mobile Data Consortium and three state agencies—will use this criterion as well as other factors to decide which jurisdictions receive the equipment. The IMTC will review and prioritize applications at their regularly scheduled meeting on Feb. 28.

This is an equipment-only grant. Installation of the equipment is the responsibility of the receiving agency, and agencies will be asked to install the equipment within six months of its receipt. No other match is required.

A list of qualified P25 narrowband repeaters and base stations is available here: <http://psc.apointl.org/2010/01/01/narrowbanding/>. The formal announcement and application form are provided on the IMTC website at: <http://interop.mt.gov/imtc.mcp>. The deadline for applications is Sun., Feb. 27 at 5:00 pm.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Marty Angeli, IM Communications System Planner, at (406) 441-5416 (mangeli@interopmtproject.org) or the IMTC Chair, Kerry O'Connell, at (406) 582-2071 (Kerry.OConnell@gallatin.mt.gov.)

Northern Alliance Webpage Developed

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

Northern Alliance is a functional exercise that involves all counties and tribal nations within the Northern Tier Consortium, which is part of the Interoperability Montana (IM) Project. The event will follow the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) recommended exercise procedure and operations.

Northern Alliance 2011

The program seeks to provide an effective event-based training exercise that will test the ability of Northern Tier first responders to effectively use the trunking radio system. Target dates for the exercise are June 12-17, 2011. The exercise will provide the following:

- Training on the new radio system
- Functionality testing of the trunked radio system
- Validation of communications

HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

- Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Development
- Exercise of the Emergency Operations Plan
- Implementation of Mutual Aid
- Procedure test of regional communications
- Development of an after-action improvement plan

The site contains a link to a flyer about the event as well as meeting materials, agendas and minutes. For more information, please visit the new Northern Alliance webpage at http://interop.mt.gov/northern_alliance.mcp.x.

Questions? Contact Bill Fleiner, Northern Alliance Exercise Director, (406-980-2053 or broadwaterdes@co.broadwater.mt.us) or Marty Angeli, IM Communications System Planner, (406-441-5416 or mangeli@interopmtproject.org).

The next planning team meeting is scheduled from 9:00 am to noon on Feb. 17 at the Hill County Sheriff's Office, 1450 Second Street W., in Havre. Arrangements have been made to allow remote access using the GoToMeeting® internet active browser site. If interested in participating remotely, please contact Marty Angeli.

Legislature Passes Wireless 9-1-1 Bill

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

House Bill 22 (HB22), to extend a sunset on wireless 9-1-1 funding for less populated counties in Montana passed the House and Senate this week and is now on its way to the Governor's Office for signature. Wireless 9-1-1 funding improves the effectiveness and reliability of the service by providing dispatchers with the cell number and location of a wireless 9-1-1 caller.

Current law provides that 84% of wireless enhanced 9-1-1 fees be distributed to cities and counties on a per capita basis. The remaining 16% is distributed evenly to counties that have 1% or less of the total population of the state. The 16% clause allows those counties with less than 1% of the population to receive additional fees to help deploy wireless enhanced 9-1-1 services. HB22 extends this funding formula through June 30, 2015.

Becky Berger, 9-1-1 Program Manager for the State of Montana, said, "In today's mobile society, it is important that all areas in Montana have wireless enhanced 9-1-1. As our families, friends and co-workers travel Montana for work or pleasure, we have to come to expect that if we dial 9-1-1, we will receive assistance."

Montana 9-1-1 Centers and wireless service providers have made major progress in deploying

wireless 9-1-1; however, rural areas still struggle due to lack of funding and resources.

Upcoming Meetings

- **Thurs., Feb. 17**
Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) Consortium
Billings • 9:00 am - noon
Detention Facility, 3165 King Ave East
- **Thurs., Feb. 17**
I-15/90 Corridor Consortium
Butte • 10:00 am - noon
Butte Chamber of Commerce, 1000 George Street
- **Thurs., Feb. 17**
Northern Alliance Exercise Planning Team Meeting
Havre • 9:00 am - noon
Hill County Sheriff's Office, 1450 Second Street W.
- **Mon.-Tues., Feb 21-22**
Canada /U.S. Border Radio Coverage Regional Debrief
Regina, SK • 9:00-3:00 both days
http://www.defsec-consult.ca/CANUS_Debrief_En.htm
- **Thurs., Feb. 24**
Big Sky 11 Consortium
Billings • 10:00 am – noon
Yellowstone Co. EOC/Fire Station, 2305 8th Ave. North
- **Mon., Feb. 28**
IM Technical Committee (IMTC)
Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
MACo Large Conf. Rm., Lower Level, 2715 Skyway Dr.
- **Wed., March 2**
IM Contract Sub-Committee
Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
Rm. 160, Mitchell Bldg.; 125 N. Roberts St.
- **Mon., March 7 (Please note date change)**
IM Finance Committee (IMFC)
Helena • 9:00 am - 12:00 pm
Anderson ZurMuehlen, 828 Great Northern Blvd.
- **Mon., March 7 (Please note date change)**
IM Governance Committee (IMGC)
Helena • 1:00 - 5:00 pm
Anderson ZurMuehlen, 828 Great Northern Blvd.
- **Tues., March 8 (Please note date change)**
IM Project Directors Meeting (IMPD)
Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
MACo Large Conf. Rm., Lower Level, 2715 Skyway Dr.

